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OCD Revision, 10 August 1950

IRWIN
DRAFT COPY TO GENERAL IRWIN

SUBJECT: Central Registry of Personality Files on Individuals of Intelligence and Security Interest

REFERENCE: Memorandum to Chairman, LSC, from JGoff, G-2, dated 23 July 1950

1. The reference concerns itself with two problems, one of which is of security rather than a biographic nature. The security problem itself has two aspects:

a. The collection, filing, indexing and dissemination of information facilitating security checks on American citizens and other individuals resident or transient in the U.S.; and

b. The collection, filing, indexing and dissemination of information facilitating security checks on individuals resident or found in foreign areas during possible future military operations.

2. The problem mentioned in Paragraph 1a is not within the sphere of responsibility of this Agency, but is rather a responsibility of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. CIA is not a member of the internal security committee chaired by the FBI.

3. Toward solution of the problem mentioned in Paragraph 1b, this Agency using IBM indexing techniques has on hand or has access to biographic information on approximately [] foreign individuals, about [] of whom are recorded under CIA's

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responsibilities for security rather than for purposes of positive biographic intelligence.

4. It is true that holdings of information on foreign nationals are scattered, and that there does not now exist any single biographic facility embracing all available information concerning them. It is believed that files of biographic information maintained for counter-intelligence purposes are kept separate, in each of the IAC agencies, from the files maintained for positive intelligence purposes. The security considerations which prevent merging these two types of files within each of the agencies would undoubtedly apply, perhaps with even greater force, to the larger undertaking which you have suggested for consideration. It is proposed, therefore, that the counterintelligence personality files of the several agencies be treated as a separate problem, and that consideration be given to the desirability of developing a central machine index to all of them. Such an index would be a costly undertaking, but if generally regarded as of sufficient value to the government it should be seriously considered.

5. On the positive side of biographic intelligence, separate files are maintained by each of the IAC agencies as well as by several others. State Department's Biographic Intelligence unit holds dossiers on about [] foreign nationals, and these have been machine-indexed by CIA at State Department's request. Under NCIC 8 the Biographic Register of this Agency has built up dossiers on some [] foreign scientists and technologists, and it has in addition prepared machine indices to the names of some [] foreign nationals mentioned in

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intelligence documents held by CIA. Extension of this indexing system to embrace the names of foreign nationals recorded for positive intelligence purposes in all the IAC agencies would be costly, but not impossible.

6. I should be glad to receive from the IAC members specific statements of needs in the two spheres of biographic intelligence, the positive and the counter-intelligence. Central machine indexing, separate for each of the two spheres, might be undertaken if there is agreement that such indices would be of value to all, and agreement that all agencies would contribute to one or other of the indices all biographic information held by them on foreign nationals. Such indices would be a first step toward the complete centralization of biographic intelligence which you have suggested for consideration. They might lead the way toward the larger undertaking, one which would be very costly in itself but which would probably result in 1) greatly increased efficiency, 2) budgetary and manpower savings in the several IAC agencies, and 3) a considerable net saving to the Federal government.

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